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however, things are different, new papers are starting there daily, and succeeding well—at Lyons two new papers have appeared within the last three months, and in different parts of France about fifteen papers have been successfully started during the present year.

Drury-lane Theatre is at length let; but the chances of success are very doubtful. Mr. Lee, the new lessee, is considered a bold man, and the friends of the other gentlemen who tendered, rejoice that their tenders are refused. Mr. Lee however is a clever man, and a good manager, and he has already entered into arrangements which are well calculated to give éclat to a first season. It is believed that he will make tempting offers to Braham, and Mr. Laurent of the Italian Theatre in Paris has offered to supply him with an Italian Corps de Ballet, equal to that which is at the King's Theatre.

(Private Letters.)

CHALMERS AND IRVING.

London, 18th May.

Dr. Chalmers has been in town during the last week. He held forth, on Sunday, for an hour and a-half, in the Scotch church, Regent Square; and every part of that ample pile was thronged to hear him. Lord Lansdown, the Marquess of Stafford, Lord L. Gower, Mr. Peel, (Sir Robert rather) and many other "illustrious ones," of both sexes, were in early attendance—the service beginning at eleven. The street was filled with splendid and gay equipages—the crowd extended beyond the porches to the outer door—and all was bustle and excitement to hear the Demosthenes of the Scottish kirk. For my own part, I often doubted, after reading the splendid sermons of Dr. Chalmers, for I had never heard him, whether they were adapted for a popular audience; possessed as they were of every refinement and polish that literature could afford, they seemed to me to require an audience to appreciate their merits, far more accomplished than I could give credit to his ordinary Caledonian congregations for being. But I never had a better opportunity of being convinced of how much depends on the "pronunciation" of the ancient orators, which Cicero pronounced to be necessary in the first, and the second, and the third degree, to the formation of a public speaker. It was so with Dr. Chalmers. All his fine language and illustration would have gone for nothing, had they been delivered in the plain, tame, "gentlemanly" pulpit style which prevails here among the best preachers of the episcopal churches. With the Scottish divine, however, not a sentence—not a phrase was lost—all was energy and emphasis "with due discretion;" whether he soared or crept along the ground (which latter, in truth, he very seldom did,) he commanded the undivided attention of his auditory; he dictated, and he thundered out the mild precepts of the gospel with surprising power: at least, to me, it was surprising, thinking, as I always did, and to the contrary of which I am still far from being persuaded, that the principles and practice of the Christian religion are better advocated—better enjoined, by the gentle methods of persuasion, than by the stern alarms of the drum ecclesiastic. Your Dublin folk, at least the majority of the Rotunda frequenters, I know, think otherwise—they are fond of hearing the word delivered *con furore, con strepito*, as the sons of the mul-

sicians say; they love an awakening exhortation from a zealous brother in the Lord: they delight in the thunders of Armstrong more than in the gentle persuasive accents of Mathias. But it is only the fashionable influenza of the day in Ireland: there is no disputing about tastes; let us only hope that it be not of any very lengthened duration.

Dr. Chalmers's *personnel* is by no means possessing. He is coarse-featured, short-necked, and altogether clumsy looking: his hair cut short—its tint an iron gray. His action in the pulpit, owing to his left hand being perpetually fixed upon his manuscript, is almost wholly confined to the right side. He moves his whole body, rapidly, forward or backward, upward or downward: but still the right shoulder is ever elevated; the right arm is in perpetual motion. There is nothing graceful in his delivery—its characteristic is its force. He labours to produce conviction rather than to persuade. His voice is loud enough—but harsh with overstraining: it splits the ear occasionally, and sometimes borders on a scream. In what, then, you will ask, consists his particular attraction? How has he become so celebrated? By his animation and earnestness; by the beauty and eloquence of his language; and by the evident perfection, the palpable completeness of all that he delivers. We can observe no redundancy of epithets, no idle digressions, no spinning out of "the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument." Every sentence seems to have received its last polish; it is fit for press; and the sermon, generally, leaves no longer any doubt but that those eloquent discourses of his, which have been published, were pronounced originally just as they now meet the eye of the reader.

I presume the discourse of yesterday was not then delivered for the first time: it was evidently written every word, but so familiar was the preacher with his manuscript, so intensely had he studied it, or so extremely legibly was it penned, that with the exception of its precluding, as I have already said, the motion of his left side, it seemed to give him, in the delivery of it, no inconvenience. A written sermon—to which, by the way, I am exceedingly averse—I never before heard delivered with so much energy and vigour; and if I could only add, that it contained a due admixture of the benign, gentle aspirations, which, as it appears to me, are far more conducive to make and to keep men Christians, I should pronounce it to be a composition of predicatorial eloquence of the highest order. Yet, your Richard Pope, after all, is the best preacher I ever heard.

. The manner of Dr. Chalmers is all that I intended to write about: with the matter of his discourse I shall not meddle further than simply to say, that its topics were of a very comprehensive and general character—"on the conduct of the irreligious," perhaps it might be defined; it was in this respect, what it should be, precisely an *occasional* sermon.

It is long since the walls of the national kirk have been warmed by such a crowd. The orations of its extraordinary "meenisther and pasthur" have no longer any attraction for the million. Their excitement is no more; the glory has departed from that house—Ichabod Irving is an altered man. At least, I should conclude him altered, for, after frequent, fair, and impartial hearings, I can find nothing in him to justify the religious rage that once prevailed upon his account. His physical capabilities are,

no doubt, admirable; his voice, in its sober and subdued tones, is faultless; his talent for recitation, in delivering a psalm for instance, or in pronouncing the Lord's prayer, is indeed of a very high order. But beyond this, I have been able to discover in him nothing more remarkable than his extravagance of action, and his consummate skill (though last not least) in the art of mystifying. To such perfection has he carried this art, that I think we may safely say, the more we apply ourselves to understand what he undertakes to explain, the less we know about it. A few evenings since, I had a fine opportunity of being convinced of this. The preacher went on for an hour mystifying and explaining the history of Samson—every incident of that great man's life, recorded in Scripture, he proved, by a peculiar process of reasoning, to be a typification allegorical of Christ and his church. The riddle, the foxes and firebrands, the jaw-bone of an ass—O, that the comment were all written in a book! I left the Scottish kirk, that night, most strangely edified. My brains were spinning like a teetotum.

C.

LONDON UNIVERSITY.

London, 17th May.

Saturday last I witnessed one of the most interesting spectacles it was ever my good fortune to behold; the distribution of prizes among the medical classes of the Metropolitan University. Having been present last year on a similar occasion, I was the more anxious a second time to sit, the delighted spectator of a ceremony, calculated to raise up in the mind sensations of the purest and loftiest description. Last year, Earl Grey presided. Every one is familiar with the character of that renowned and haughty aristocrat. He took the seat of honor, as though it belonged to him of strict right—addressing to the "assembled thousands" a few brief and pregnant sentences, explanatory of the business for which they had met. He discharged his laudable duties with stately dignity—preserving his usually erect and haughty deportment: no smile played around his face; not a congratulatory remark fell from his lips, as he deposited the wished-for prize in the hands of the anxious candidate. As the motto of each, the signal of success, was read aloud, the delighted owner bounded eagerly forward, with youthful impetuosity—desirous to grasp what had been so long the object of his fondest wishes; but the nearer he approached, the more slow became his steps, averted by the unbending gravity of England's haughtiest peer. Once, indeed, the noble earl seemed pleased—it was when a titled student appeared before him, to receive the meed of honour; he bent his head (comparatively speaking) very low indeed, and smiled most graciously on the young aristocrat. The beautiful and appropriate speech with which the noble earl closed the proceedings of the day, won every heart; and his rank was forgotten in admiration of his talents. On the present occasion the chair was filled by Sir James Graham. But I should say a word in description of the place:—it is a lofty and spacious theatre, with the semicircular seats gradually rising one above the other, and capable of containing 1000 persons. A platform was raised a little from the floor in the centre—there sat the council, immediately behind the chairman; and immediately before him were the professors, prepared to report in succession

upon the state of their respective classes; the medical pupils, to the number of 250, occupied the adjacent benches:—they were not of course so very young, being students of much proficiency in the medical sciences; 22 might be about the average of their ages, as well as I could conjecture from their countenances—pale with study and apprehension; their appearance was not therefore hailed with such rapturous enthusiasm—nor did it excite so tender an interest in the audience, as if they had been some half-dozen years younger. Still they were loudly and heartily applauded. Once, indeed, a very young lad being called forth to receive a medal, was greeted with tremendous applause by his fellow-students: he seemed to be an especial favourite, and more, he seemed to feel the full value of their good opinion—for, when he came forward, instead of bowing to the council, he turned round, like an honest, manly fellow, and bowed to his brother students. This circumstance afforded an opportunity to the eloquent chairman of paying the happiest and the justest compliment I ever listened to.—Upon the whole, however, this was not a very imposing spectacle—there was no effort at grandeur or magnificence—no false glare, or mere show—no attempt to dazzle and delude the public; the ceremony brought home to the breasts of the spectators this important truth, that the place where they sat was an institution of great practical utility, and possessing every facility of imparting sound knowledge, and a beneficial professional education.

The professors gave glowing descriptions of the attainments and perseverance of their pupils. Professor Patterson made one rather startling announcement—namely, that the candidates for his prizes had *written* 1200 *quarto* pages. It was, however, heard with pleasure that the heads of the College of Surgeons had declared, that no candidates had ever appeared before them who answered with such marked ability as those who came from the University of London. The conduct of the chairman it was which chiefly gave life and interest to the scene—it was, in truth, beyond all praise; in appearance, language and manner, he was the reverse of Earl Grey: the behaviour of the peer was cold and stiff—that of the commoner cheering and encouraging. Young and handsome, his graceful figure and expressive countenance fascinated every eye; his face and changing complexion proved that he felt a warm interest in what was passing around him;—he almost anticipated the candidate, and his hand was stretched out to give, before the pupil was ready to receive; but he did not content himself with merely giving—he stood up, on each occasion, and with a clear voice, and in the most engaging manner, bestowed a well-timed panegyric, which seemed to be more valued by the delighted student than the gold medal itself. The presence of mind which the hon. baronet displayed on each occasion was really surprising. Not less than 30 pupils came before him, and for each he had something original and excellent—sometimes suggested by the accidental circumstance of unusual applause, but generally prompted by the Latin motto, which supplied him with a happy classical allusion. When the details were gone through, he concisely addressed the meeting in as appropriate, as eloquent, and as touching a speech, as ever I listened to: it made a deep impression on all who heard it; he delivered his sentiments with the ease and fluency of an accomplished speaker, with the

exactness of a scholar, and the composure of a gentleman. The part of his address which affected me most was, that in which he warned his young hearers against the evils, and the mental reproaches, inseparable upon lost time; and gave us an example himself, and that without the least appearance of vanity or affectation; he declared, with sincerity, that he now, in every hour of his public life, bitterly repented the time he had lost at Oxford, in the pursuit of vain pleasure; and implored his young hearers to profit by the result of his experience—and this after he had, only the night before, signalized himself, in the House of Commons, by the delivery of one of the ablest speeches made throughout the session—(for those who wish to form some idea of his parliamentary eloquence, we refer to a preceding No. of the *Gazette*)—he eulogised the system of education pursued in Edinburgh; and illustrated his opinion by the splendid career of Horner and Brougham, who were only two from amongst the many distinguished pupils I sent forth. An address of this description, it is needless to say, produced a vast sensation amongst such an audience, and in such a place.

Doctor Birkbeck also addressed the students, (he is a calm, philosophical, scholar-like sort of person,) and spoke with great mildness and good sense.

J. W.

HORÆ GERMANICÆ.

DER FREISCHÜTZ.

My dear President,

Notwithstanding the acknowledged similarity between the English and German languages, and notwithstanding, also, my unwillingness to contradict generally received opinions, I consider it my painful duty to announce that “Der Freischütz” does *not* mean *fried shots*; neither has it the most remote pretension to be rendered into our vernacular, by that happy alternative “the seventh bullet!” which the concoctors of some of the English play-bills have been considerate enough to offer to their readers, unlearned in the tongues.

The word Freischütz, as you, Oh invisible and most literary president! are full well aware, is a compound, the literal English translation of which is free-shooter, or free-archer; a harmless appellation enough in itself, and which does not appear necessarily to imply any connection between him who bears it, and the powers of darkness; unless, indeed, we were to suppose a Society of Free-shooters existing in Germany, who maintained the same correspondence with Zamiel, which is sometimes hinted to subsist at home, between our own free-masons and the evil one. There is, however, as far as I have been able to ascertain, no such society; and it is some consolation to know that the term Freischütz is nearly as little understood on the Continent as it is here. One *German* of whom I asked its signification, told me it meant a poacher, another assured me it meant a game-keeper! I came to the conclusion that it could mean neither, and that my informants were ashamed to confess their ignorance.

“What then,” methinks I hear you, in a tone of dignity, demanding from your lofty chair of state, “has been the result of *your* cogitations as to the true meaning of the phrase?” and here, I beg you will imagine that I assume an expression of great diffidence and

humility, such as might become Ariel, the messenger of Prospero, when returning to the presence of his master, after an unsuccessful mission in the air; my *speculations* are at your service.

The Germans are notoriously good riflemen, and in almost every village of that country, there is an annual game or pastime, of very ancient origin, called *Freischiessen* (free-shooting) which consists in firing with rifles at a target, and was probably first established to produce emulation and consequent excellence in the use of fire-arms. When I first saw it, it reminded me of Sir Walter Scott’s description of the festival of the Popinjay; and here the most successful shot is called the king of the *Freischiessen*, as, in the other case, he used to be termed captain of the Popinjay. The opera of which we are treating, does, in fact, open with a representation of this sport, in which the royal honors of the game are adjudged to the peasant Kilian, to the no small mortification of poor Max.

I humbly conceive, therefore, that if the title of the piece be intended to apply to this latter character, it means nothing more than one who practises or takes part in the amusement of the *Freischiessen*; if, on the other hand, it applies to Caspar, it is possible it may have a more sinister signification, and have reference to the licentious or unallowed means by which he secures his success as a sportsman: the expression *Freibooter* (free-booter) for instance, implies criminal practices on the part of him to whom it applies; and the word *Freikugel* (free-bullet) occurs in this Opera, meaning, as the Scotch would say, a bullet that is *na’ canny*. The word Freischütz, in fact, appears to have been coined expressly for this Opera, and let Herr Kind tell us, if he please, what he means by it.

I promised in my last to give you a translation from the original, of what I consider an excellent scene between Max and Caspar, and concerning which, I hope, both yourself and the public are experiencing a becoming degree of impatient anxiety; but, as I love “to do all things in order,” and having, with the little learning I possess, translated for your proper gratification, the first scene of Kind’s Freischütz, (for Weber has nothing to do with this scene, it not forming part of the musical composition, and never, indeed, having been represented on any theatre, even in Germany,) I shall commence my extracts at the beginning, promising faithfully the scene to which I have already alluded, in my next.

I should not perhaps have thought the following scene sufficiently important to communicate, had I not been struck some time ago, when reading in a number of the Edinburgh Literary Journal, a Review of a Drama called “Aloyse,” with the similarity which a scene there extracted, bears to the first scene of the Freischütz; and although I have become convinced, on comparison, that the similarity is accidental, yet I think it sufficiently remarkable to excite surprise.

Independently of this circumstance however, the scene seems to me a pretty introduction to the Opera, without which, indeed, as the author, M. Kind, expresses himself with much naïveté, the Hermit coming in so unexpectedly among the *Dramatis Personæ* at the conclusion of the piece, has all the appearance of a *Deus ex Machina*! The scene is also necessary to account for the virtue which the